

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03

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AF-10 EUR-25 EB-11 GAC-01 IO-13 RSR-01 /139 W

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R 300425 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8867

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 2197

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT JA

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER LEE'S VISIT TO JAPAN

1. EMBASSY HAS FINALLY OBTAINED GOS TRANSCRIPT OF PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN TOKYO ON MAY 11. ADDRESSEES SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THAT TEXT IS NOT NECESSARILY VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT. GOS PRACTICE OFTEN IS TO PUBLISH EDITED VERSION OF PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THEIR BEING GIVEN.

2. GIVEN BELOW IS TEXT OF PORTION DEALING WITH MULTINATIONAL TASK FORCE. FULL TEXT BEING POUCHED TO ALL ADDRESSEES. QUOTE:

QUESTION: I SHOULD LIKE TO ASK ABOUT TWO QUESTIONS, FIRST THE CONCEPT OF A NEUTRALIZED SOUTHEAST ASIA... SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE.

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/ QUESTION ABOUT WHAT SORT OF ROLE JAPAN  
COULD PLAY IN MAINTAINING PEACE AND GUARANTEEING  
NEUTRAL ASIA CONCEPT /

PRIME MINISTER: THE CONCEPT AS SPELT OUT AT A MEETING OF  
FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES IN  
DECEMBER 1971 CALLED FOR THE GUARANTEE OF  
NEUTRALITY BY AMERICA, CHINA AND SOVIET  
UNION IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER. THEY DID NOT  
MENTION JAPAN PROBABLY BECAUSE JAPAN IS A  
PEACE- LOVING NATION WITH ONLY A SELF- DEFENCE  
FORCE. I AM QUITE SURE THE JAPANESE CAN  
MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE PEACE AND  
SECURITY OF THE AREA FIRST, BY NOT GOING  
NUCLEAR AND SECONDLY, BY NOT HAVING AN  
INDEPENDENT LARGE NAVAL TASK FORCE.  
INDEPENDENT MEANING SEPARATE AND DISTINCT FROM  
THE ALLIED OR WESTERN WORLD FORCES IN THE  
AREA. IF THERE WERE TO BE A COMPLETELY  
JAPANESE TASK FORCE, IT WOULD BE SUBJECT  
TO A GREAT DEAL OF FLAGELLATION BY COUNTRIES  
IN THE REGION, ( WHICH) FOR A DIVERSITY OF  
REASONS, MUST HAVE A BETE NOIRE TO LET OFF  
THEIR PENT UP FEELINGS OF FRUSTRATION. BUT  
IF IT WERE PART OF, SAY, AN AMERICAN,  
AUSTRALIAN AND EVENTUALLY, EVEN A WEST  
EUROPEAN TASK FORCE TO KEEP THE INDIAN  
OCEAN AND THE PACIFIC OCEAN FREE TO ALL THE  
PEACEFUL MERCHANT VESSELS OF ALL COUNTRIES,  
THAT WOULD BE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION  
TO STABILITY AND SECURITY.

QUESTION: SIR, COULD YOU ENVISAGE RUSSIAN VESSELS BEING  
PART OF THIS TASK FORCE?

PRIME MINISTER: WELL, IF THERE WEREN' T ANY RUSSIAN VESSELS,  
THERE WOULDN' T BE ANY NEED FOR THE OTHER  
TASK FORCE, WOULD THERE?

QUESTION: HOW MUCH OF A THREAT THEN YOU REGARD THE SOVIET  
NAVAL PRESENCE HERE?

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PRIME MINISTER: IT IS A VERY MODEST PRESENCE FOR THE  
TIME BEING. IT IS BOUND TO GROW, AND  
AS AMERICAN REPORTS FROM SATELLITE  
OBSERVATIONS HAVE SHOWN, IT IS NOT GOING  
TO BE A THREAT UNLESS IT IS IN THE  
PREDOMINANT OR THE EXCLUSIVE TASK FORCE

IN THE AREA. IF THERE IS A COUNTERBALANCING FORCE, A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF EQUILIBRIUM WILL BE MAINTAINED.

QUESTION: / QUESTION ON WHETHER THE ENVISAGED MULTI-NATIONAL TASK FORCE SHOULD HAVE GROUND AND AIR EXPONENTS. /

PRIME MINISTER: WELL, THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF A TASK FORCE INCLUDES PLANES WHICH TAKE OFF FROM A FLIGHT DECK OR WITH THE AID OF A CATAPULT. AND I DON' T ENVISAGE A MARINE FORCE. . . I THINK THE LEBANESE TYPE OPERATION IS A LITTLE OUTDATED. AND ANYWAY, THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL RESISTANCE, ALMOST AMOUNTING TO ANATHEMA AFTER SOUTH VIETNAM. I THINK JUST THE NAVAL AND THE AIR COMPONENTS WILL BE A SUFFICIENT GUARANTEE THAT THE GENDARMERIE IS EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH EXTERNAL USE OR ILLEGAL USE OF FORCE.

QUESTION: HAVE YOU TALKED ABOUT THIS WITH PRIME MINISTER TANAKA YESTERDAY? AND I ALSO WANT TO ADD: IF YOU HAVE ANY VIEW OF JAPANESE ACCEPTANCE OF THIS GENERAL CONCEPT THAT THEY WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH A REGIONAL TASK FORCE? I AM ALSO INTERESTED IN THE WASHINGTON SENSE OF THIS, THAT YOU PERCEIVED WHEN YOU WERE THERE A MONTH AGO.

PRIME MINISTER: I THINK YOU SHOULD POSE YOUR QUESTION TO MR. TANAKA WHEN YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO MEET HIM. IT WOULD BE DISCOURTEOUS OF ME TO TELL YOU AT A UNCLASSIFIED

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PRESS CONFERENCE OR EVEN PRIVATELY WHAT I DISCUSSED PRIVATELY WITH JAPANESE MINISTERS YESTERDAY. AS FOR THE WASHINGTON VIEW, THAT IS FARILY EXPLICIT. THE ATLANTIC CHARTER WHICH IS TO BE BROUGHT UP TO DATE OR WHICH WILL HAVE A NEW CHAPTER WRITTEN, SPECIFICALLY SPELLS OUT NOT ONLY COOPERATION IN THE TRADE AND ECONOMIC MATTERS AND CURRENCY PARITIES AND BALANCE- OF- PAYMENTS BUT ALSO DEFENCE BURDEN- SHARING. I DON' T THINK THERE IS ANY DOUBT THAT THE AMERICAN VIEW IS THAT THEY ARE CLOSELY INTER- RELATED PROBLEMS, AS INDEED THEY ARE. BUT THE EUROPEAN VIEW, AS YOU HAVE READ, IS THAT HOWEVER

INTER- RELATED THEY ARE, THEY SHOULD BE DISCUSSED

IN SEPARATE CATEGORIES.

QUESTION: I AM A JOURNALIST FROM ASAHI NEWSPAPER. I  
WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHETHER YOU THINK THAT  
GUARANTEEING A NEUTRAL ASIA IS FEASIBLE OR  
NOT, AND HOW DO YOU CONSIDER THE PROSPECT  
... OF POST- VIETNAM SITUATION: HOW DO YOU  
EVALUATE IT?

PRIME MINISTER: ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT THE PEOPLE' S REPUBLIC  
OF CHINA HAS EXPRESSED ITS SUPPORT FOR THE  
IDEA. HOW MUCH OF IT IS BECAUSE IT HASN' T  
GOT A BLUE WATER FLEET I DO NOT KNOW.  
BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT  
FOR A NEUTRALIZED SOUTHEAST ASIA BY EITHER  
THE AMERICANS OR THE SOVIET UNION. BOTH OF  
WHOM HAVE BLUE WATER FLEETS. END QUOTE.  
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